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OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 20 September 1996, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-first session the item entitled "Operational activities for development" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 7th, 9th, 22nd and 37th meetings, on 17, 18 and 30 October and on 2 December 1996. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/51/SR.7, 9, 22 and 37). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 3rd to 6th and 8th meetings, from 14 to 18 October (see A/C.2/51/SR.3-6 and 8).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the progress at mid-decade on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children (A/51/256);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/49/629) entitled "United Nations system common premises and services in the field" (A/51/124-E/1996/44);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1995 (A/51/391);

(d) Letter dated 5 July 1996 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the summit meeting of the seven major industrialized countries, held at Lyon, France, from 27 to 29 June 1996 (A/51/208-S/1996/543);

(e) Letter dated 12 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the communiqué adopted by the twenty-seventh South Pacific Forum, held at Majuro, Marshall Islands, from 3 to 5 September 1996 (A/51/357);

(f) Letter dated 30 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Declaration of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, adopted in New York on 24 September 1996 on the occasion of the celebration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Movement (A/51/462-S/1996/831);

(g) Letter dated 4 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the declaration adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 and China at their twentieth annual meeting, held in New York on 27 September 1996 (A/51/471);

(h) Letter dated 30 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, held in New York on 25 September 1996 (A/51/473-S/1996/839);

(i) Letter dated 18 October 1996 from the Permanent Representatives of Azerbaijan and Kazakstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the joint statement on Caspian Sea questions adopted at Baku on 16 September 1996 (A/51/529).

4. At the 7th meeting, on 17 October, the Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme made an introductory statement (see A/C.2/51/SR.7).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/51/L.8 and L.44

5. At the 22nd meeting, on 30 October, the representative of Costa Rica, on behalf of the States Members that are members of the Group of 77 and China, subsequently joined by Mexico and Turkey, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Progress at mid-decade on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children" (A/C.2/51/L.8), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 45/217 of 21 December 1990 and its decisions 47/447 of 22 December 1992, 48/446 of 21 December 1993 and 49/439 of 19 December 1994,

"Noting with appreciation the near universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the significant progress made in national capacities to plan, implement and monitor progress for children within the framework of the needs and rights of the child,

"Recognizing the linkage between the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and welcomes the conclusions contained therein;

"2. Welcomes the significant progress reported by most countries on achieving the majority of the mid-decade goals and objectives of the World Summit for Children, particularly in immunization, the control of diarrhoeal diseases, polio, guinea worm and iodine deficiency disorders, and access to safe water;

"3. Welcomes further the overwhelming response of developing countries to the commitments agreed at the World Summit for Children;

"4. Expresses concern that progress on malnutrition, maternal mortality, sanitation, and girls' education has been weak, uncertain, or even negligible;

"5. Takes note of the considerable variation in the progress made across countries and regions due to different baseline conditions in 1990 and the varying rates of progress in relation to the goals;

"6. Reaffirms the need for effective follow-up to the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s;

"7. Recognizes the need for more intensive efforts in order to reach the goals for child mortality, the education of children, in particular girl children, maternal mortality, child malnutrition and sanitation;

"8. Recognizes also the important role of the United Nations system in providing coordinated support for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the World Declaration and Plan of Action and the leadership role of the United Nations Children's Fund;

"9. Invites Governments to increase their budget allocations to basic social services for covering the special needs of children in order to facilitate achieving the goals set out in the World Declaration and Plan of Action;

"10. Urges developed countries, in particular those countries whose overall performance is not commensurate with their capacity, taking into account established official development assistance targets, including targets established at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and their current levels of contribution, to increase substantially their official development assistance, including contributions to the operational activities of the United Nations system;

"11. Stresses the need for according particular attention to the special needs of children in regions of slow progress, particularly the least developed countries and sub-Saharan Africa, and in other developing countries that have not yet reached the mid-decade goals;

"12. Recognizes the need for continued international support to those developing countries that have already reached the mid-decade goals or the end-of-decade goals, in order to ensure the sustainability of such achievements;

"13. Recognizes also the contribution to the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children of the mutual commitment between interested developed and developing country partners to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of national budgets to basic social programmes;

"14. Stresses the need to continue strengthening and expanding effective partnerships between Governments, the United Nations system and other international organizations, international donor agencies, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, in order to ensure full achievement of the goals by the year 2000;

"15. Stresses also the need for greater efforts to involve children themselves in all matters affecting them, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

"16. Stresses further the need for sustainable progress in the attainment of goals through, inter alia, support for national capacity-building, including that of local communities and civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

"17. Recognizes the importance of fostering exchanges of experience between countries, including South-South cooperation, in order to help disseminate successful programmes;

"18. Calls on all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to take into account the lessons learned at mid-decade and invites relevant governing bodies to consider specific measures, within their respective competencies, to address the special needs of children for the achievement of the goals for the year 2000;

"19. Calls on all relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen inter-agency collaboration regarding refugee

children and take the necessary steps to ensure that such collaboration is considered in related policies and programmes;

"20. Stresses the necessity and importance of setting measurable indicators and targets and of improving data collection and assessment concerning the implementation of all Summit goals, including the goal of improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances, in particular, displaced and refugee children, so that the issue continues to be one of the key components of the World Declaration and Programme of Action;

"21. Calls on Governments and their partners to adjust, refine and prioritize, where necessary, their goals and strategies within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, taking into account lessons learned during the mid-decade reviews, to suit local situations;

"22. Calls on Governments and the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to mainstream the gender perspective in their activities, plans and programmes;

"23. Urges full integration of the follow-up to the Summit goals into the work of the inter-agency task forces and other mechanisms established to ensure a coordinated and effective follow-up to major United Nations conferences;

"24. Decides to convene a special session of the General Assembly in 2001 to review the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children;

"25. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at the special session a review of the implementation and results of the World Declaration and Plan of Action, including appropriate recommendations for further action;

"26. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on preparations for the special session."

6. At the 37th meeting, on 2 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Kheireddine Ramoul (Algeria), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Progress at mid-decade on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children" (A/C.2/51/L.44), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.8).

7. At the same meeting, the representative of the Philippines orally revised the text by reversing the order of operative paragraphs 5 and 6.

8. Also at the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of conference-servicing implications of draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.44 (see A/C.2/51/SR.37).

9. Also at its 37th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.44, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 12).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.44, draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.8 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft decision

11. At its 37th meeting, on 2 December, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1995 (A/51/391) (see para. 13).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Progress at mid-decade on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 45/217 of 21 December 1990 and 50/120 of 20 December 1995 and its decisions 47/447 of 22 December 1992, 48/446 of 21 December 1993 and 49/439 of 19 December 1994,

Noting with appreciation the near universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child[1] and the significant progress made in national capacities to plan, implement and monitor progress for children within the framework of the needs and rights of the child,

Recognizing the linkage between the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General,[2] and welcomes the conclusions contained therein;

2. Welcomes the significant progress reported by most countries on achieving the majority of the mid-decade goals and objectives of the World Summit for Children, particularly in immunization, the control of diarrhoeal diseases, poliomyelitis, Guinea worm and iodine deficiency disorders, and access to safe water;

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[1] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[2] A/51/256.

3. Also welcomes the overwhelming response of all countries, especially the developing countries, to the commitments agreed upon at the World Summit for Children;

4. Notes with appreciation the contributions of international and bilateral donors and civil society to the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children;

5. Takes note with concern of the considerable variation in the progress made across countries and regions owing to different baseline conditions in 1990 and the varying rates of progress in relation to the goals;

6. Expresses particular concern that progress on malnutrition, maternal mortality, sanitation, and girls' education has been inadequate, and in some cases negligible;

7. Reaffirms the need for effective follow-up to the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s;[3]

8. Recognizes the need for more intensive efforts to reach the goals for child mortality, the education of children, in particular girl children, maternal mortality, child malnutrition and sanitation;

9. Also recognizes the important role of the United Nations system in providing coordinated support for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the World Declaration and the Plan of Action and the leadership role of the United Nations Children's Fund;

10. Invites Governments to increase, as appropriate, their budget allocations to basic social services for covering the special needs of children in order to facilitate the achievement of the goals set out in the World Declaration and the Plan of Action;

11. Urges developed countries to make increased efforts to mobilize additional resources for the fulfilment of the goals and objectives of the World Summit for Children and to ensure, in the context of their development assistance, that programmes to that end will have a priority when resources are allocated;

12. Encourages civil society and the private sector to continue to support generously the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children;

13. Stresses the need for according priority to the special needs of children in regions of slow progress, particularly the least developed countries and sub-Saharan Africa, and in other developing countries that have not yet reached the mid-decade goals;

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[3] A/45/625, annex.

14. Recognizes the need for continued cooperation and partnership and appropriate international support to those developing countries that have already reached the mid-decade goals or the end-of-decade goals, so as to ensure the sustainability of such achievements;

15. Also recognizes the contribution to the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children of the mutual commitment of interested developed and developing country partners to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of national budgets to basic social programmes;

16. Stresses the need to continue strengthening and expanding effective partnerships between Governments, the United Nations system and other international organizations, international donor agencies, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, so as to ensure full achievement of the goals by the year 2000;

17. Also stresses the need for greater efforts to involve children themselves, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in all matters affecting them;

18. Further stresses the need for sustainable progress in the attainment of goals through, inter alia, support for national capacity-building, including that of local communities and civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

19. Recognizes the importance of fostering exchanges of experience between countries, including South-South cooperation, in order to help disseminate successful programmes;

20. Calls upon all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to take into account the lessons learned at mid-decade, and invites relevant governing bodies to consider specific measures, within their respective competencies, to address the special needs of children for the achievement of the goals for the year 2000, giving priority to issues and areas where progress has been slow;

21. Also calls upon all relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen inter-agency collaboration regarding improved protection and assistance for children in especially difficult circumstances, including displaced and refugee children, as well as those suffering from exploitation, and to take the necessary steps to ensure that such collaboration is considered in related policies and programmes;

22. Stresses the necessity and importance of setting measurable indicators and targets and of improving data collection and assessment concerning the implementation of all the goals of the World Summit for Children with regard to the development, protection and survival of children, including the goal of improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances;

23. Calls upon Governments and their partners, taking into account lessons learned during the mid-decade reviews, to adjust, refine and prioritize, where

necessary, their goals and strategies within the framework of the World Declaration and the Plan of Action and in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to respond to local situations;

24. Also calls upon Governments and the United Nations system to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children;

25. Urges full integration of the follow-up to the goals of the World Summit for Children into the work of the inter-agency task forces and other mechanisms established to ensure a coordinated and effective follow-up to major United Nations conferences;

26. Urges once again all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a matter of priority, with a view to reaching the goal of universal adherence established by the World Summit for Children;

27. Decides to convene a special session of the General Assembly in 2001 to review the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children, and to consider the arrangements for the special session at its fifty-third session;

28. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its special session a review of the implementation and results of the World Declaration and the Plan of Action, including appropriate recommendations for further action;

29. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the preparations for the special session and on progress on the implementation of the present resolution.

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13. The Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

The General Assembly takes note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.[4]

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[4] A/51/391.